

Request for City Council Committee Action from the Department of Intergovernmental Relations

Date: November 28, 2012

To: Council Vice President Robert Lilligren and Chair Elizabeth Glidden

Referral to: Committee of the Whole/IGR Subcommittee

Subject: Federal Budget

Recommendation: Approve resolution

Prepared by: Gene Ranieri on behalf of Council Member Cam Gordon
Approved by:
Presenters in Committee: Council Member Gordon

Supporting Information: The Congressional leadership and the President will attempt over the next few weeks to negotiate a solution to the federal fiscal crisis. The negotiations will include discussion on spending cuts, the extension of soon-to-expire tax reductions and general tax reform.

In discussing spending cuts, domestic discretionary programs and defense programs are "on the table." It is probable that a compromise solution will include both spending reductions and tax reform. Among the spending issues is the size of defense spending. With the winddown of US military involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are calls from public officials and organizations calling for shifting federal funding priorities from military operations to meeting domestic needs. Among those calling for such action are the United States Conference of Mayors, the city of St. Paul, the Women Legislators' Lobby, and local nonprofit organizations including the Minnesota Arms Spending Alternatives Project (ASAP).

The call to shift spending priorities has been the subject of proposed official Congressional and state legislative actions. Rep. Ellison has introduced a resolution (H. Res. 733) that expresses the sense of the Congress that any deal replacing the Budget Control Act of 2011 should contain serious revenue increases and no Medicare, Medicaid, and Social Security benefit cuts and significantly reduce defense spending to focus the United States Armed Forces on combating 21st century risks. The resolution has approximately 40 co-authors.

Rep. Bill Hilty of Finlayson introduced a resolution (HR1249) in March 2011 urging the United States Congress and the President to reorder federal spending priorities. The resolution had 35 co-authors.